



# Mercury and Mercury Compounds

## Why am I being warned about potential exposure to mercury and mercury compounds?

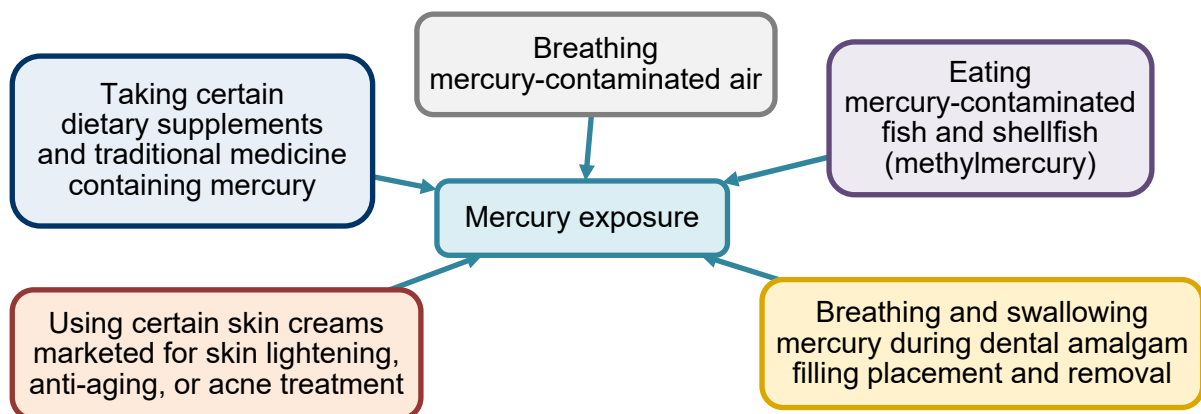


- Mercury and mercury compounds are on the [Proposition 65](#) list because they can cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. Exposure to mercury and mercury compounds during pregnancy can affect brain development and cause learning and behavior problems for the child.
- Methylmercury compounds are also on the Proposition 65 list because they can cause cancer. Exposure to methylmercury compounds may increase cancer risk, and exposure during pregnancy can affect brain development and cause learning and behavior problems for the child.
- Proposition 65 requires businesses to determine if they must provide a warning about significant exposure to [listed chemicals](#).

## What is mercury?

- Mercury is a heavy, silver-colored, liquid metal. It is found in:
  - ▶ Certain types of [fish and seafood](#) (in the form of methylmercury).
  - ▶ Silver-colored dental amalgam fillings.
  - ▶ Fluorescent lights, including compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs.
  - ▶ Glass thermometers, older barometers, other gauges, and some batteries.
  - ▶ Some [skin creams](#) used for skin-lightening, anti-aging, and acne treatment.
  - ▶ Some dietary supplements and traditional medicine.

## How does exposure to mercury and mercury compounds occur?



- During pregnancy, mercury can pass from mother to baby.

**How can I reduce my exposure to mercury and mercury compounds, including methylmercury compounds?**

- ✓ Choose fish that are lower in mercury, such as salmon, tilapia, trout, canned light tuna, sardines, anchovies, and oysters.
- ✗ Do not eat fish or seafood that is high in mercury, such as tilefish, shark, swordfish, king mackerel, marlin, orange roughy, bluefin tuna, and bigeye tuna.
- ✓ When consuming fish that you, friends, or family catch, follow [OEHHA sport fish advisories and safe eating guidelines](#).
- ✓ Follow the US Environmental Protection Agency's instructions for [recycling batteries](#), disposing of CFL [bulbs](#) and [mercury thermometers](#), and cleaning up [broken CFL bulbs](#) and [broken mercury thermometers](#).
- ✓ If you need a tooth filling, talk to your dentist about other restorative materials, such as resin composite, porcelain, and gold alloys.
- ✗ Do not take Ayurvedic medicines that contain high levels of mercury.
- ✓ Be aware that some other traditional medicines and certain dietary supplements have in the past contained high levels of mercury. Avoid products that have mercury warnings. For products without warnings, consider contacting the manufacturer and asking if the products contain mercury.
- ✗ Do not use skin-lightening, anti-aging, and acne treatment creams unless their ingredients are listed, and you are certain they do not contain mercury.

**For more information:****General Mercury Fact Sheets and Resources**

- World Health Organization (WHO)
  - ▶ Mercury  
[http://www.who.int/ipcs/assessment/public\\_health/mercury/en/](http://www.who.int/ipcs/assessment/public_health/mercury/en/)
- US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)
  - ▶ Mercury  
<http://www.epa.gov/mercury/>
  - ▶ Storing, Transporting and Disposing of Mercury  
<https://www.epa.gov/mercury/storing-transporting-and-disposing-mercury#recycling>
- US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)  
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)
  - ▶ Public Health Statement for Mercury  
<https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/PHS/PHS.aspx?phsid=112&toxid=24>
- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)  
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)  
Biomonitoring California
  - ▶ Mercury  
<https://biomonitoring.ca.gov/chemicals/mercury>

### Mercury in Fish

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)  
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
  - Mercury in Fish and Shellfish  
<https://oehha.ca.gov/fish/mercury-fish-information-people-who-eat-fish>
  - Fish. Guidelines for eating fish and shellfish  
<http://oehha.ca.gov/fish.html>

### Mercury in Products

- US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)
  - Mercury in Batteries  
<http://www.epa.gov/mercury/mercury-batteries>
  - How Do I Recycle?: Common Recyclables  
<http://www.epa.gov/recycle/how-do-i-recycle-common-recyclables#bat>
  - Recycling and Disposal of CFLs and Other Bulbs that Contain Mercury  
<http://www.epa.gov/cfl/recycling-and-disposal-after-cfl-burns-out>
  - Clean up a Broken CFL  
<http://www2.epa.gov/cfl/cleaning-broken-cfl>
  - What to Do if a Mercury Thermometer Breaks  
<http://www2.epa.gov/mercury/what-do-if-mercury-thermometer-breaks>
- US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)  
US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
  - Use Caution with Ayurvedic Products  
<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/use-caution-ayurvedic-products>

### Mercury in Skin Creams

- US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)  
US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
  - Mercury Poisoning Linked to Skin Products  
<http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm294849.htm>
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
  - Mercury in Skin Creams from Mexico Can Make You or Your Child Sick  
[https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDCPHP/DEODC/EHIB/CPE/CDPH%20Document%20Library/MercuryCream\\_5\\_1\\_14\\_for\\_Mexico\\_En.pdf](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDCPHP/DEODC/EHIB/CPE/CDPH%20Document%20Library/MercuryCream_5_1_14_for_Mexico_En.pdf)

### Proposition 65

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)  
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
  - Proposition 65: Background  
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/faq>
  - Proposition 65: The List of Chemicals  
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/chemicals>
  - Proposition 65: Fact Sheets  
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/fact-sheets>